THE NINTH DAY.

8th March 1922.

The Assembly met at 11-45 A. M. on Wednesday, the 8th March 1922.

109. Efficient supervision of Municipal Administration by the Government for few years.

Mr. Paul Daniel M. A., L. T. (Member, Municipal Council, Nagercoil) urged the need for the supervision of the work of Municipalities by Government at least for a time, so as to guard them against the dangers of slackness and inexperience into which a body of honorary workers was often likely to fall. Many of the Municipalities were of recent origin and there was considerable diversity in their financial and other features. The population under municipal administration ranged from 72,000 to 3,000, the receipts from Rs. 78,000 to Rs. 1,800 and the balance of funds from Rs. 22,000 to Rs. 200. The Municipal Regulation did not take cognizance of these differences, but granted the same powers to all councils alike and imposed on them a great number and variety of duties. The control reserved to Government under Chapter XIII of the Regulation was, in the Member's opinion, far too nominal to be of sufficient effect in safeguarding the interests of all the inhabitants of the town. The Member drew attention to the number of meetings held in a year as an index to the efficiency of the councils and the interest taken by the councillors in municipal matters. Those meetings varied from 53 in one Municipality to 12 in another. The Member observed that for one reason or other many respectable people declined to seek re-election. Those that sought election were persons who expected the councillorship to give them a status or artificial support which they could not secure from their intrinsic worth. It was desirable that there should be some arrangement by which the efficiency of a Municipal Council could be tested periodically. Now the Account Officers examined and audited the accounts of Municipalities and sometimes they made rambling excursions into forbidden grounds, and pointed out violations of rules and bye-laws. This was naturally objected to by the Municipalities concerned. The member argued that, when accounts were given so much importance, weightier items of municipal administration required more effective supervision. He therefore suggested that provision should be made for personal supervision and examination on the spot by a responsible officer to be appointed by Government. The fact that 13 out of 19 Municipalities asked at the current session of the Assembly for some kind of help or other from Government went to support his proposal as regards the need for a controlling officer for the Municipal Councils of the State as a whole.

Dewan's reply.—You are, I believe, putting forward a case for the appointment of an Inspector of Municipalities. Yesterday I gave my reply to a similar representation made by another Member, and I am even now of the same opinion. I do not think that any personal supervision of the sort that you want is desirable. You yourself admit that even the audit now undertaken by the Account Office is resented. The accounts of Municipal Councils and their vouchers are, I believe, now audited by Government auditors once in two years. The Outside Audit Department has recently been strengthened and I believe municipal accounts will hereafter be audited annually. Auditing is, more or less, a technical matter, and if even this is resented, it follows that an actual inspection of the administrative work of the Municipal Councils and the passing of remarks as the result of such inspection, which may not be quite complimentary to the Councils, will be resented even more. You also say that the popular character of the Councils should not be interfered with. We should, therefore, be all the more cautious in introducing the kind of supervision advocated by you. Municipal Councils in this country are, no doubt, more recent institutions than they are elsewhere. But, as I told another Member yesterday, although

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you may not have any considerable experience of municipal administration, you are all people possessing much intelligence and sense of responsibility, and it will not take you very long to fall into line with approved municipal administration. It seems to me that in due course any defects that now exist will be remedied. I do not by this mean that Government should remove all control or that they should cease to have anything to do with municipal administration. When the administration of a particular Municipality becomes so bad or paralysed by dissensions or other causes, Government should, no doubt, intervene and effectively too. Ordinarily, however, the Councils, composed as they are very largely of non-officials possessed of intelligence and a sense of responsibility, should try to remedy defects by their own efforts. I quite agree with you in the observation that there is a great deal of diversity as regards the size and importance of Municipalities, and it is rather unfortunate that all the 19 towns in the State should be worked under the same Regulation and expected to be administered in the same way. There may be no need for a Municipality in a place which does not contain a large population and which is not decidedly urban in its character, and any proposal placed before Government with a view to take a rural place outside the pale of the Municipal Regulation would be considered carefully and sympathetically. I may add that the Village Panchayat Regulation which is now under preparation would afford a less costly but more suitable method of administering the less important towns.

110. Desirability of converting the Pallikkal Ayurveda Vaidyasala into a dispensary.

Mr. K. G. Thomas (Member, Nominated) spoke in high terms of the management of the Ayurveda Department and suggested that the department might be improved by (1) starting a Government herbarium, (2) abolishing useless vaidyasalas, and (3) sanctioning more substantial grants at the rate of Rs. 50 per mensem to each vaidyasala. He also requested that a monthly grant of not less than Rs. 50 be sanctioned to the vaidyasala established at a cost of Rs. 3,500 at Pallikkal in the Mavelikara taluk. He suggested the use of machinery for the manufacture of medicines in the Pharmacy.

Dewan's reply.—I have to give you the same reply that I gave to the gentleman from Chirayinkil who spoke on the subject of Ayurveda yesterday. The policy of Government is to further improve the system of Ayurvedic treatment and Government are willing to allot more money if proposals come up from the Director of Ayurveda. As far as I remember, we have been generally sanctioning all the proposals coming from the Director for the improvement of the Department. Even in regard to the machinery that you wish to see introduced to improve the output of medicines in the Pharmacy, if the Director makes the necessary proposals, Government will view them sympathetically. As for a Herbarium, there is one now, but the soil of it is not suited for the purpose, and the Director is on the look out for a more eligible site.

In regard to grant-in-aid institutions also, it is for the Director to say which institution deserves more grant, and which less. We have appointed an Inspector of Vaidyasalas who will be able to furnish the Director with the requisite data in this matter. You may be interested to hear that we have arranged for anatomical studies in the General Hospital for the students of the Ayurveda Patasala. They have to study this by dissection of dead bodies, and the Darbar Physician has kindly agreed to provide the necessary facilities for the purpose.

VI. EDUCATION.

111. Certain problems connected with education and the work of the Education Department.

Mr. T. K. Velu Pillai B. A., B. L. (Member, Trivandrum Taluk) referred to the progress of education in the State as seen from the various reports published from time to time, and said that it pointed to a deplorable condition of affairs. In spite of the fact that Travancore was superior to other parts of India in point of education, Travancoreans were not found fit to fill the higher appointments in the

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